

Explained: Why Urdu is an Indian language, not a foreign one

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News: Recently, Punjab University had proposed to merge the Department of Urdu language with school of foreign languages to be set up after merging departments of French, Russian, German, Chinese and Tibetan.

Facts:

Origin of Urdu language:

- According to the historical references, the origin of Urdu had taken place in Punjab state of India several centuries back.

- Before it is called Urdu, it was familiar with other names including Hindustani, Hindavi, Dehlavi and Rekhta.
- The poet Ameer Khusro in his book 'Ghurrat-ul- Kamal' had written that Masood Lahori a renowned poet born in Lahore in 11th century had composed poetry in Hindavi(Urdu) which is also called Dehlavi.
- Further, historians have said that Urdu had developed and flourished in Delhi during the period of 'Delhi Sultanate' from the 12th to the 16th century.
- It then developed during the period of 'Mughal Empire' in Delhi from the 16th century to 19th century.

Similarity with Punjabi Shahmukhi language:

- Urdu language is written from right to left and the same was the case of Punjabi Shahmukhi language which was also written right to left.
- Despite its Persian script, Urdu is an Indian language because several Indian languages like Punjabi Shahmukhi language is also written in Persian Script.

Urdu's official status in India:

- Urdu is one of the officials' languages under the Constitution of India. It is among the 15 Indian Languages written on the Indian Currency notes.
- It is also one of the official languages in states like Kashmir, Telangana, UP, Bihar, New Delhi and West Bengal.
- In Punjab, all old records in the Revenue Department are available in Urdu language only.
- However, post-independence much attention was not given to the Urdu language and several states where Urdu was a compulsory subject in school curriculum was removed.